

**Diversity Policy
And Framework for institutional Plan Development
Comments on December 18, 2009 DRAFT**

February 4, 2010

Comments Received from Eastern Kentucky University:

The current draft titled *Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Policy Framework for Diversity (December 18, 2009)*, (Policy) is very different from the previous iteration of the draft, titled *Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan (November 24, 2009)* (Plan).

This issue raises two major concerns:

- The collaborative endeavor between CEO/CPE, CPE staff, presidents, institutional representatives and legal counsel of the public postsecondary institutions that existed previously is being perceived as not having added valuable input into this plan.
 - More specifically, the process for developing and writing such a Plan/Policy appears to have deviated from previous procedures/protocols for development of a document of this nature.
 - Through a systematic and transparent process the above listed stakeholders will be able to provide valuable input which will result in a more inclusive and collaborative plan.
- The Plan began as a collaborative and inclusive statewide diversity plan, with institutional individuality recognized, however, the Policy appears to be evolving into a CPE driven policy with not as much recognition of the value of individual institutional diversity plans.
 - More specifically, although language in the Policy does provide that institutions may have individual diversity plans, the practical effect of identifying specific categories for measurement/accountability is that these categories alone will be of value and recognized by CPE, and, thus campuses will respond accordingly.

Comments Received from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System:

- **Page 2; 2nd & 4th bullets:**

CPE is taking a bold and erroneous step when it equates equal opportunity with diversity.
Suggestion: A wording change to correct this discrepancy.

EEO is the law and is therefore legally mandated; diversity is NOT a legal mandate. Incorporating the words or terms together in these two bullets makes for more confusion and even pushback for diversity professional who are constantly trying to separate the two.

- **Section IV. Maintenance of Effort**

It seems redundant to me given the inclusion of sections II and III. I recommend that it (Section IV) be eliminated.

- **Section V**

CPE is making diversity synonymous Affirmative Action in this section. It appears that the requirements for an entity to develop and implement an Affirmative Action Plan have simply been labeled "a diversity plan". We should call each item what it is.

The AAP comes out of the Executive Order 11246 and it requires us to assess our workforce into the established job groups and establish goals for minorities and women once we have calculated our availability, etc.

A diversity plan is different from an Affirmative Action Plan. I don't feel comfortable in making this name change to a legally mandated document.

Suggestions: Have each college draft

- 1) An AAP with its corresponding goals/ timetables.
- 2) Also, a Diversity and Inclusion Plan with corresponding goals/ timetables (where applicable).

The AAP addresses the workforce and its activities with minorities, women and the disabled. A Diversity Plan addresses the above items and more such as:

- ✓ How many faculty have incorporated diversity/ global awareness in their curriculum?
- ✓ How many have selected new text books because of the vital need to expose our students to diversity and global awareness?
- ✓ What activities has the College undertaken to address language and cultural barriers that are faced by our staff in Student Services, Security and HR?
- ✓ What changes have been made in our Climate Survey that reflect our interest in the broad swath that diversity and inclusion cuts in our environment?

- **Page 5, Section V**

Workforce Diversity, as the categories are listed. Who is included in the Service Maintenance Category?

- **General**

The policy will require each institution to develop and submit a campus diversity plan. Does CPE want 16 or 17 diversity plans from KCTCS? Or would it be sufficient for the KCTCS to submit a master plan that includes strategies from each of the 16 colleges PLUS the System Office?

Comments Received from Kentucky State University:

The comments represent the collective review of the executive cabinet.

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- It may not be necessary to include the phrase "including other groups identified by each institution" in the Vision Statement on Page 1. Consider removing the phrase.
- On Page 2, the first paragraph and bullets should be moved to a more appropriate section. The language does not seem to relate to a Vision Statement.
- Starting on Page 3, it is difficult to understand exactly what the commitments, initiatives and objectives are. The formatting of the section does not make it easy to understand which is which.
- On Page 5, the last paragraph references "five commitments" but (again) it is unclear from reading the document exactly what the five commitments are. Should that statement read "six commitments", since there are six sections (I - VI)?
- Generally, the document does not clearly state the standards that the campuses will be held to.
- When reporting the number of faculty, the performance measure should be defined in such a way that Hispanic and Latino faculty are counted, along with African American and other groups.
- It is not clear how this plan ties in with existing Affirmative Action Plans on each campus.

Otherwise, our group was fairly comfortable with the language.

Comments Received from Morehead State University:

- I asked my Cabinet and others on campus to study the document and provide feedback. Following are our comments:
 - CPE requests similar information in other reports. Will there be minimal requests for duplicative data?
 - Clarification on the number of commitments. Are there five or six commitments?
 - On page 3, under Closing the Achievement Gap, Developmental Education and Student Transfer are listed. What is the goal?
 - On page 4, under Workforce Diversity, employment for 1, 2, 3 codes are currently reported. Are the other codes (4-7) part of the standard EO codes?
 - On page, 5, no. 2, under Closing the Achievement Gap, why would KCTCS be excluded?
 - On page 5, under the Maintenance of Effort, if these numbers are not met, would we be penalized twice since this number is also a part of the enrollment category (double counting)?
 - On page 5, under Campus Climate, is this a measurement or will CPE just publish the data?
 - On page 5, under the Institutional Status, instead of being an annual improvement, shouldn't this be every two years? Is this based on the state plan or the university's plan?
 - Finally, the policy still contains punitive provisions if goals are not met. Are we not trying to move toward a more positive approach to diversity?

Comments Received from Murray State University:

- This policy framework infrastructure sustains past achievements and moves the system to a higher level of leadership. This sentence does not read well. Try: One goal of this framework is to sustain past achievements and move the system to a higher level of accountability.
- Implement a system of institutional accountability by using metrics that are specific and measurable. specific metrics. (metrics by definition means measurable standards.
- The Council on Postsecondary Education requires that each public institution develop, not later than October 1, 2010 is this realistic timeframe for institutions to submit a plan. Especially those who are starting from scratch? a campus based Diversity Plan which shall set forth measurable objectives and strategies that will be implemented on the campus to achieve the following objectives:
- First year retention for full-time first-time freshmen (freshman to sophomore year) for ethnic/racial categories. And for Low-Income students
- NOTE: Seems you might want to reference the appendices in the body of the document so that the importance/relevance of the appendices are contextualized somehow. I think the information is good there, but without a reference in the document, it seems like the appendices are simply "add-ons" rather than essential to the entire Policy Framework.

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Comments Received from Northern Kentucky University:

I. First set of Comments.

- I believe that all who have worked on this latest draft should be congratulated for a very strong document. I believe that the draft responds to the items contained in your email.
- One of my concerns has to do with the time and resources that will be required to respond to what is a pretty substantial amount of data reporting. For example, there are seven categories under "Workforce Diversity". Would it not suffice to have three categories: executive/management, faculty, and staff? Also, is it necessary to have two different retention metrics? The key figure is whether the number of graduates is increasing. Why not focus on this metric? Please review the data requirements and eliminate any that aren't absolutely essential. This would be a big help, particularly in these times when the campuses are doing all that they can to reduce administrative infrastructure.
- Under III, 2 and 3, I believe that there should be a reference to the targeted populations.
- Finally, there is reference to "five commitments" but the list appears to be six. In any event, the Roman numerals should reconcile with this summary statement.
- One more point. I believe that the summary of best practices is a very good addition.

II. Second group of comments:

- This is a very challenging document to assess. The general intent and the direction seem clear enough, but the document struggles to achieve a sense of unity, cohesion, and consistency regarding details of "diversity" – what it means, what will be tracked, and how progress will be measured.
- To start with, the first paragraph refers to "diversity" as a "core strategy" – I don't understand how it is a strategy.

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- In the 3d paragraph, we (colleges and universities) are asked “to **commit** to eliminate attainment gaps...and work to achieve ‘**comparable results**’ among all students without regard to **race, ethnicity or economic status.**” (emphasis added) This raises two questions:
 1. What are “comparable results”? Are these “outputs” that account for differences in the “inputs”, or must the outputs be comparable in an absolute sense?
 2. The focus is on only three elements of diversity – race, ethnicity, and economic status. Later sections of the document refer to other elements.
- The “vision” section speaks in terms of diversity being broader than “race” and ethnicity” (yes, above it also included “economic status”) – it suggests that the term also embraces “identities”, “beliefs”, “values”, ethnic and racial diversity, and cultural practices (what about “economic status”?). Also, what about “gender” – which is included later in the document?
- On page 3, Commitments and Initiatives, it requires us to develop a plan “to achieve the following objectives”. What follows is a list of areas which presumably must be included in our plans, but I am at a loss to see any “objectives”. That section now adds another term that relates to diversity – “underserved” – but that term is not defined or otherwise linked to other categories of diversity. The four “categories” that seemingly are to be part of our plan and thus measured relate to underserved, racial, ethnic, and low income. However, on page 4 “Assessment and Accountability” it appears that “gender” is also included.
- I know this document is intended to say that diversity is important, and that it is important in an educational context. It accomplishes that. However, as a document designed to lay the foundation for specific plans by colleges and universities, and to establish a framework for holding institutions accountable for achieving certain objectives, it lacks clarity and cohesion.

Comments Received from University of Kentucky:

Below is a list of six major points in response to the latest statewide diversity plan draft. The first four points relate to specific draft content; the fifth and sixth are general statements in reference to the diversity plan in its entirety. We believe the plan should be inclusive, clear and concise.

- In the section titled Assessment and Accountability, there are multiple categories or groups associated with each metric. These categories are not listed consistently. For example, gender is included in enrollment, retention of all undergraduate students, and workforce retention and promotion. Gender is omitted from other student persistence measures, including first year retention and second year retention, as well as employment. Consistent inclusion of gender is recommended throughout the plan.
- Developmental Education and Student Transfer are included in the “Closing the Achievement Gap” metric. It is unclear whether these concepts are being viewed as metrics or sub-goals. If these concepts are being viewed as metrics, they don’t seem to fit the objective. There needs to be some explanation/clarification for the basis of measuring such specific criteria in a statewide diversity plan, particularly since further examination and policy development are occurring in these overall areas.

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- It is unclear how "Campus Climate" is being viewed/used. Is Campus Climate being viewed as a goal or something to be measured/assessed? Campus Climate is a condition or description of the environment, the quality of which either promotes or inhibits progress on the objectives listed elsewhere. It is recommended that institutions outline strategies and metrics developing their own methodology for documenting how to improve campus climate to ensure high quality student life and work life.
- The metric/statement titled "Maintenance of Effort does not include a new performance requirement" is not necessary. All metrics in the Assessment and Accountability section should be comprehensive and inclusive.
- Clarify the exact measures of progress for each metric and how each measure will be used to evaluate metric success, including how the change in proportionate share for categories or groups in the plan will affect the evaluation of progress.

There are/will be notable differences in the diversity planning at each institution as each campus addresses its particular needs and circumstances. The Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan must maintain the flexibility to respond to the needs of each institution and allow for changes that institutions encounter from year to year. As with institution strategic planning, adjustments are often necessary during the life of the plan and mid-course corrections should be expected in the efforts of each campus to attend to its needs.

Comments Received from University of Louisville:

Please find below the feedback received from individuals representing various organizations regarding the Diversity Policy Framework.

- I. The following comes from the Commission on Diversity and Racial Equality (CODRE)
 - "Flexibility is important but it is lacking in clarity...For the success of the plan I strongly believe specificity is necessary based on the documents I have seen at UofL....and I do not assume that these documents are the exceptions and reflect the issues that continue to impact the Commonwealth....."
 - I have read this document twice. The First draft was liveable and understandable...however this document is overly ambiguous, has numerous awkward sentences making it difficult to comprehend....the Background section (presented as a diluted historical perspective) was written in the present tense as well as being whitewashed and lacking accuracy.
 - The definition of diversity is obscure...and needs to be included in the text for clarity.

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- Best Practices section does not address best practices as it relates to research in this area...Sedlacek and other student development and affairs should have been examined...diversity aspects are not apparent in the inclusion of curriculum, teaching styles and classroom formats...these aspects are omitted (like linguistic diversity and disability). Sentences are written in a very awkward, unclear manner which allows too many diverse interpretations of what are best practices.
- Does not reflect any education of the "whole" student. Need the inclusion of the intersections of race/ethnicity and class when addressing gender
- Diversity plans need assessment measures, need reviews in less than 5 year intervals, top/senior leadership needs to be trained...too much focus of staff and unless you are willing to mandate training for faculty it will be a waste of time.... The institutional status...there are 6 commitments but you are only addressing 5...why? Progress on 5-6 commitments would be better and NO automatic eligibility to implement new academic programs....
- Where is Orfield data in document?
- Institutions need to held to a greater standard than "good faith effort"
- I strongly suggest that you go back to the original draft.

II. The Vice President of Research Diversity Committee:

- I believe that the current draft of the statewide diversity policy framework is a good document. I have a couple of minor suggestions that you may take or ignore, as you see fit.
- Page 1, "Vision" line 2: "...that address the needs of and advance diverse populations,..." may read better as "...that address the needs of, and advancement of, diverse populations,..." OR "...that address the needs of, and advances, diverse populations,..."
- Page 1, "Vision" line 4: Text reads, "Diversity is broader than race and ethnicity, including other groups identified by each institution." While I definitely agree that diversity is broader than race and ethnicity, I'm not sure it is prudent to have each institution identify and/or limit other groups that should be included under the diversity banner. I am, of course, bias but I believe the UofL Operational Definition of Diversity is an excellent one. (Diversity embraces all human differences while building on the commonalities that bind us together. It serves to eliminate discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, national origin or military status.).

III. The Commission on the Status of Women:

- The Commission on the Status of Women at the University of Louisville advises the President on issues pertaining to women and gender-based inequities. The Commission identifies issues, monitors progress, and evaluates recommendations from an inclusiveness perspective. The Commission was recently asked to review a draft of the Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Policy Framework for Diversity. It is our view that gender must be included in any definitions and policies pertaining to diversity considered by the Council on Postsecondary Education.

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- There are several places in the document where gender based language inclusiveness should be inserted. For example, in the Framework for Diversity, gender should be included in the definition of diversity, in the Introduction and Vision statements, and added to the categories in the Assessment and Accountability, and Best Practices.
- Title VII and Title IX of the Civil Right Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on, race, color, religion, sex or national origin in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Nevertheless, according to the Factsheets on the Kentucky Commission on Women website <http://women.ky.gov/ffp.htm> (1/8/2010) Kentucky women rank 49th in percentage of women with Bachelor*s degrees and 46th in health and well-being. Including gender in the Diversity Framework is the first step to raise awareness, improve access, and provide equal opportunity, insuring educational excellence and economic prosperity for all of Kentucky*s citizens.

Comments Received from Western Kentucky University:

- The data to be reported on seems to duplicate a lot of what we are already reporting elsewhere. I am hopeful there can be some consolidation vs. doing all this more than once.
- Now that this is encompassing ALL students, I question linking the consequences of not meeting four out of five to it. It seems like this is now targeting everything that we are already reporting on to CPE as part of our overall accountability, and it goes well beyond diversity (unless I am reading it wrong)
- I have some concerns with defining Diversity as encompassing any and all underrepresented groups. This is pretty broad, and the answer to which group is underrepresented may vary dependent on campus and campus demographics/location/history.
- In principle, I cannot argue with the importance of the items that are included as they represent what we are trying to do for all students. I do question the inclusion of all of this accountability for ALL students (if I read it correctly) as the Diversity Policy.

Council on Postsecondary Education (Senior Leadership)

- Will this be enough time if the framework isn't adopted until July?
- Are these areas going to be fleshed out? Seems very similar to assessment and accountability section now.
- Vision should describe the plan's aspiration and ideal future.
- Document should have a clear definition of diversity "diversity is....."
- Core Values are the fundamental ethical, moral, and professional business beliefs that guide organizational decisions and relationships. Like "diversity is linked to educational excellence and the economic future of citizens." These look more like goals and should be rewritten.
- What is the CPE authority to have a equal opportunity plan or diversity plan (KRS 164.020(19))

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- What is the authority to implement an accountability system and is the accountability system specific?

Action Plan Commitments and Initiatives

- Under action plan commitments and initiatives forth measurable objectives and strategies that will be implemented on the campus to achieve the following objectives: Substitute "accountability measures".
- The formatting between the sections titled "action plan commitments and initiatives" and "assessment and accountability" is inconsistent.
- Section titled "Institutional Status" need to clarify five v. six accountability measures.
- Do institutions have Diversity Plans now? How consistent is this framework with their current plans? How are institution Diversity Plans reflected in their institution strategic plans? How will this document be reflected in the CPE strategic plan?

Compiled by Sherron Jackson and Rana Johnson